

▶ Watch this video on www.youtube.com

Ads by Google

Your Community News Schools Opinions Sports Lifestyles Features Contact us

Local News

/ News / Local News /

« Expecting the unexpected

HACTC investigates new treat...»

- Local News
- Schools
- Obituaries
- Opinions
- Arts & Entertainment
- National News
- International News
- SUBMIT NEWS

Saberi speaks at Eagles

Journalist who was jailed in Iran speaks at series in Rugby

October 20, 2012

By Chris Bieri Tribune Editor , Pierce County Tribune

Save | Post a comment | SHARE

Roxana Saberi intended to write a book about Iranian culture and society from her perspective as an American of partly Iranian descent.

Instead, Saberi's first book on Iran was a first-person narrative from the inside of a prison after she was jailed and charged with espionage.

Saberi, a journalist, author and human rights activist who grew up in Fargo, spoke to a crowd of more than 120 people in Rugby on Oct. 7 about her experiences in Iran, including her harrowing four-month stretch of imprisonment in 2009.

Article Photos



Saberi appeared in the second installment of "Prairie Talks" thanks to her friend and former classmate, Fillmore native Kristi Rendahl, who established the series earlier this year.

The two women met at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn., when they were both piano scholars.

Since her release in May, 2009, Saberi has had told her story worldwide and was on a panel with the Dalai Lama in upstate New York the day after her appearance at the Rugby Eagles Club.

The day before speaking in Rugby, she was at a Rural Women of America conference in Bowman, and she's never surprised by the knowledge of international affairs by the state's populace.

"I feel very fortunate to be able to speak to groups, especially in North Dakota," Saberi said. "It's my home state and I enjoy that one-on-one contact. The world is becoming more interconnected and people have a lot of curiosity."



Rugby, ND **45°F** [Extended Forecast](#) [Find Another Location](#)
Data provided by The Weather Channel ®

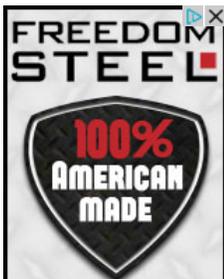
News, Blogs & Events

I am looking for:

SEARCH

in:

- News, Blogs & Events
- Web



Angie's List Local Rating

Read Local Ratings & Reviews. Find Contractors in Your Area!
www.AngiesList.com/Contractor AdChoices ▶

Air Purifier Reviews

Unbiased & Detailed Comparisons. Help you choose your Air Purifier.
www.RabbitAir.com AdChoices ▶

K Hovnanian New Homes

New Homes For Sale in Chaska More Home Value! Take a Tour Today
khov.com/NewHomesForSaleIn AdChoices ▶

In 1997, Saberri won the Miss North Dakota pageant, and in 2003 she started working as a news correspondent in Iran, the homeland of her father, Reza Saberri.

After spending about five years as a reporter in Iran for a number of news outlets, Saberri, whose mother is Japanese, had her credentials revoked.

Saberri was arrested in January 2009 after arousing suspicions with all the interviews she was doing for the book.

In jail, Saberri was not able to immediately contact friends and family, and when she was, she was told to lie about where she was and how she ended up in jail.

"You get so scared you can smell your own fear," Saberri said, repeating words the another inmate told her in Evin Prison, which housed a number of dissenters and political prisoners.

She said she met 14 other women who were prisoners at the prison who amazed her with their positive attitudes and unwillingness to to the wither under pressure of false imprisonment.

"The last of the human freedoms is the ability to control one's attitude," Saberri said.

At one point during her term in the jail, Saberri went on a two-week hunger strike and much to her surprise, was joined by people worldwide.

"I was so humbled," she said. "I was in awe of the goodness in humanity."

Finally in May 2009, with the help of pressure from journalist groups and the U.S. State Department, Saberri was released after her 8-year jail sentence was overturned.

Although Saberri's not 100 percent sure of her plans for the near future, she is in the process of completing the book she initially set out to write from her home in New York City.

"I'm finishing that book that was never finished," she told the crowd. "I'm going to continue my human rights activities and have fun. I enjoy freedom. It's great."

[Save](#) | [Post a comment](#) |

Recommend

Send

You and 47 others recommend this.



0

[Subscribe to Pierce County Tribune](#)

Pierce County Tribune

219 South Main Ave. , Rugby, ND 58368 | 701-776-5252

© 2012. All rights reserved. | [Terms of Service and Privacy Policy](#)